

NO. 28
FEB.-MAY

TALES

FROM THE

CRYPT

Eldred



10¢

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



FAMOUS 1950s EC COMICS!



NO. 12
JUNE



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TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



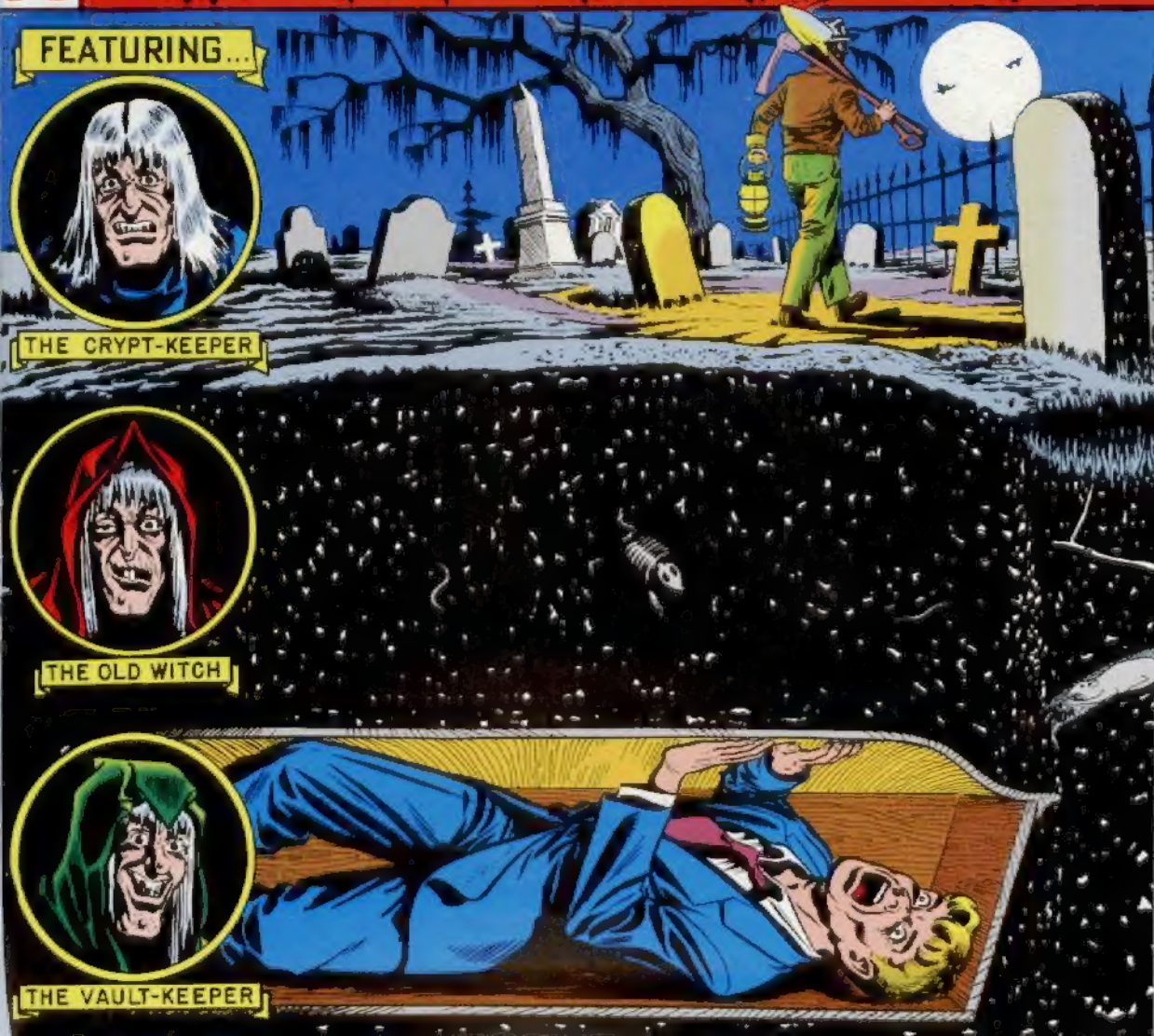
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE **FAMOUS (AND INFAMOUS!) EC COMICS** LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE **FIRST ISSUE** OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE **BITTER END!** GET ON THE BANDWAGON, AND **FILL IN THE GAPS** IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!!



CRYPT #1



CRYPT #2



CRYPT #3



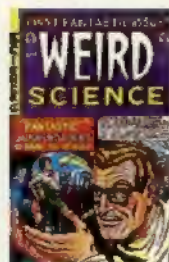
CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



W SCI #1



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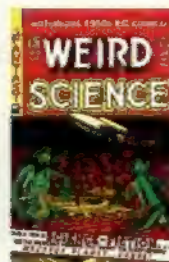
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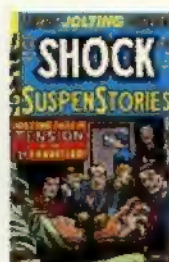
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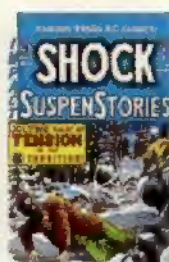
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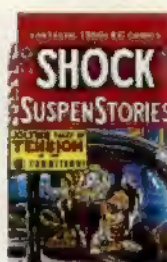
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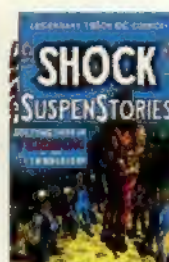
SHOCK #2



SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



SHOCK #6

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THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR *MORE*, EH? CAN'T GET ENOUGH *HORROR*, EH? WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR *DIME'S WORTH* THIS TIME! YEP! IT'S *ME...YOUR HOST...THE CRYPT-KEEPER!* HMMM! WHAT *CHILLER* CAN I TELL YOU THAT WILL MAKE YOUR *BLOOD RUN COLD* AND THE *HAIR ON YOUR NECK CRAWL*? *AHHH!* I KNOW JUST THE ONE! THIS IS A *REAL SPINE-TINGLER!* I CALL IT... *AFFECTIONATELY...*

BARGAIN IN DEATH!



MY STORY HAS ITS BEGINNING ON A COOL OCTOBER EVENING IN 1928! IN THEIR ROOM IN THE DORMITORY OF LOGANWOOD MEDICAL COLLEGE, TWO YOUNG STUDENTS SIT DEJECTEDLY, THEIR FACES SULEN...

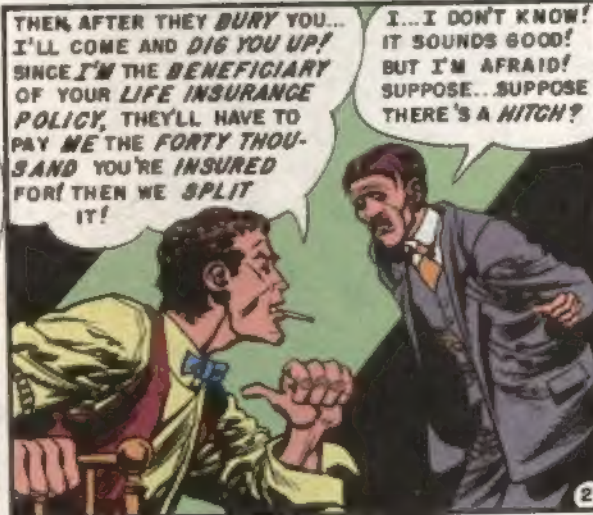
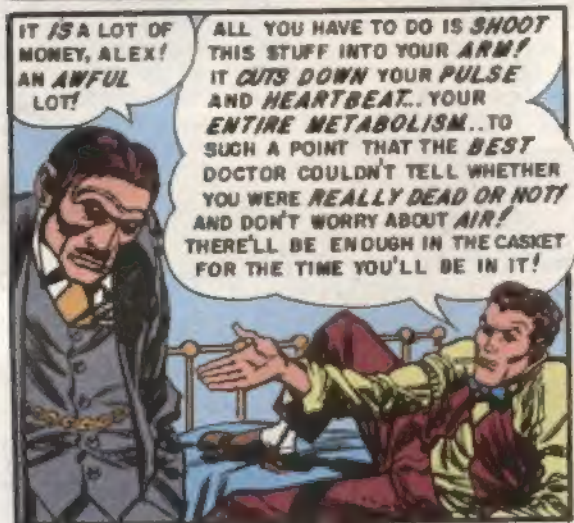
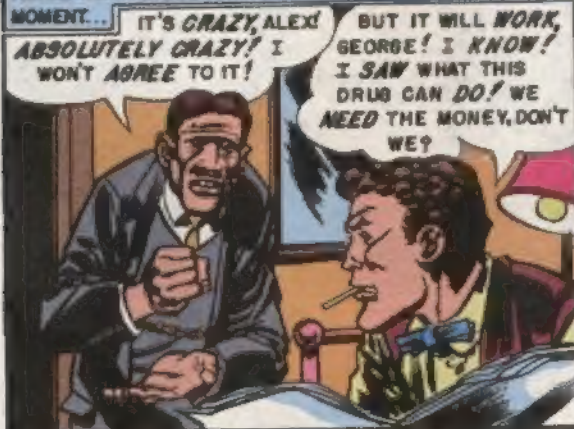
WHAT CAN WE *DO*, MEL? UNLESS WE RAISE SOME MONEY, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO PAY OUR *LABORATORY FEES!*

AND WITHOUT THAT LAB GOURSE, WE CAN'T CONTINUE WITH OUR STUDIES! *DISECTING* THOSE *CADAVERS* IS *REQUIRED* FOR ANATOMY CREDIT!





HEH, HEH! NOW THAT WE'VE MET SID AND MEL, AND HEARD THEIR PROBLEM, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE SECOND SCENE OF OUR GRISLY LITTLE YARN! THIS IS TAKING PLACE FAR ACROSS TOWN AT ALMOST THE SAME MOMENT...





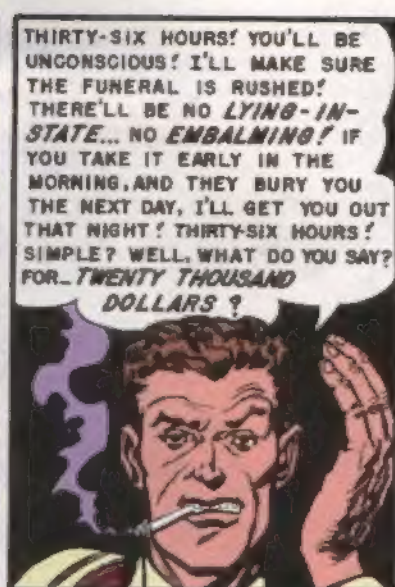
DON'T BE A FOOL, GEORGE! WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

SUPPOSE THE INSURANCE COMPANY SUSPECTS?



HOW CAN THEY? IT WILL LOOK LIKE **HEART-FAILURE!** I'LL BE AT HOME WITH A **PERFECT ALIBI!** NO ONE ELSE HAS ANY **MOTIVE!**

HOW LONG WILL THE **EFFECT** OF THE **DRUG** **LAST?**



THIRTY-SIX HOURS! YOU'LL BE **UNCONSCIOUS!** I'LL MAKE SURE THE **FUNERAL** IS **RUSHED!** THERE'LL BE NO **LYING-IN-STATE...** NO **EMBALMING!** IF YOU TAKE IT **EARLY** IN THE **MORNING**, AND THEY **BURY** YOU THE **NEXT DAY**, I'LL GET YOU OUT THAT **NIGHT!** **THIRTY-SIX HOURS!** **SIMPLE?** WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY? FOR... **TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS?**

HMMM! SEEMS LIKE **EVERYBODY'S** GOT PROBLEMS! WELL! LET'S HURRY BACK ACROSS TOWN AND SEE WHAT **SID** AND **MEL** HAVE DECIDED...



ALL RIGHT, MEL! I'LL **DO IT!**

ATTA BOY, SID! WE'LL GET OLD CLEM TO HELP US! HE'LL DO **ANYTHING** FOR **MONEY!**

HEH, HEH! THE PLOT SICKENS... EH, KIDDIES? AS FOR **ALEX** AND **GEORGE**, SURELY YOU MUST HAVE ANTICIPATED...



I'LL **AGREE**, **ALEX!** BUT IT'S AGAINST MY BETTER **JUDGEMENT...**

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, **GEORGE!** I'LL TAKE CARE OF **EVERYTHING!** HERE'S THE **HYPODERMIC** AND THE **DRUG!** TAKE A **FULL SHOT...**



AND FOR **GOD'S SAKE**, GET RID OF THE **BOTTLE** AND **NEEDLE** BEFORE THE **STUFF** TAKES **EFFECT!** YOU'LL HAVE ABOUT **TEN MINUTES!**

I'LL BE **CAREFUL**, **ALEX!** DON'T WORRY!



SO THAT'S THE **SITUATION**, FIENDS! LIKE IT? **GOOD!** NOW FOR THE **COMPLICATIONS!** READY? HERE GOES! THE **NEXT MORNING**, **GEORGE'S** **LANDLADY** **DISCOVERS** HIS **BODY...**

A DOCTOR IS SUMMONED BY THE HYSTERICAL WOMAN.



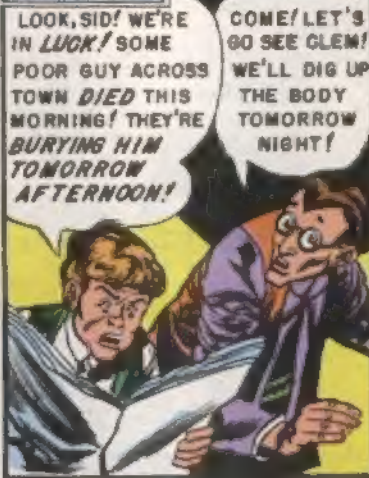
ALEX RECEIVES THE BAD NEWS...



ALEX ARRANGES GEORGE'S FUNERAL.



THAT EVENING... IN THEIR DORMITORY ROOM...



SID AND MEL FIND CLEM, THE RATHER STUPID COLLEGE HANDY-MAN, AND EXPLAIN THEIR PLAN...



THE NEXT DAY, TOWARD LATE AFTERNOON, GEORGE... UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRUG... IS 'LAID TO REST'...



AFTER GEORGE'S GASKET IS LOWERED INTO THE YAWNING BLACK PIT, THE GRAVE-DIGGERS STEP FORWARD...



FROM A DISTANCE, ALEX, GEORGE'S BEST FRIEND AND BENEFICIARY, SMILES AS THE SOFT CRAWLING EARTH IS SHOVELED INTO GEORGE'S GRAVE...



WHEN ALEX RETURNS TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE, A STRANGER IS WAITING FOR HIM...



MEANWHILE, DEEP DOWN UNDER THE MOLDY BLACK EARTH IN THE CEMETERY, SOMETHING STIRRS! GEORGE IS COMING TO...

HUH? WHERE...WHERE AM I? I...
OH! NOW I REMEMBER! OH, MY GOD!
I'M IN A COFFIN...BURIED ALIVE!



GEORGE REACHES UP TO THE SATIN-LINED LID OF HIS UNDERGROUND PRISON...

I...CAN'T...BUDGE...IT! OH, LORD! HOW
LONG CAN I LAST IN HERE?
WHERE'S ALEX? WHY DOESN'T
HE COME!



AT THAT MOMENT, ALEX STANDS ON A USED-CAR LOT, SURVEYING A SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE...

I'LL TAKE IT! CAN I
DRIVE IT OFF THE LOT?

JUST AS SOON AS WE FILL
OUT THE NECESSARY PAPERS,
SIR! WILL YOU STEP INTO
THE OFFICE?



LATER THAT NIGHT, AS GEORGE LIES BURIED SIX FEET BELOW THE CEMETERY'S GRAVESTONE BEDECKED SURFACE...

GASP... AIR... GIVING... OUT! CAN'T... GASP... LAST... MUCH...
LONGER! OH, GOD! GOD! WHERE'S ALEX?



SLOWLY, THE GATE OF THE DESERTED CEMETERY SWINGS OPEN, ITS RUSTED HINGES SCREAMING IN PROTEST! THREE FIGURES ENTER...

C'MON!
THIS WAY!

I...I DON' LIKE
THIS NO HOW!

SH-H-H-H, CLEM!
REMEMBER THE
FIVE BUCKS!

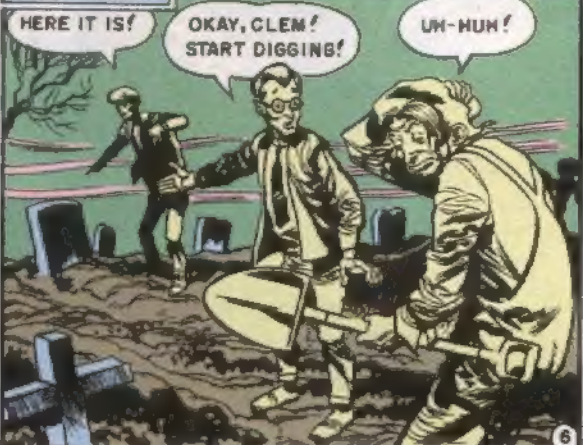


GINGERLY, SID AND MEL, THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS, MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE GRAVE-MOUNDS TO THE FRESH ONE...

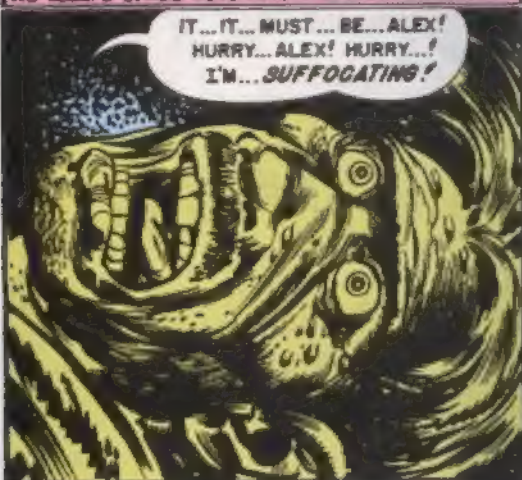
HERE IT IS!

OKAY, CLEM!
START DIGGING!

UH-HUH!



DOWN BELOW, GEORGE HEARS A MUFFLED THUD, AS CLEM'S SPADE CUTS INTO THE DARK SOIL...



LITTLE BY LITTLE, CLEM'S SPADE GOUGES OUT AN EVER DEEPENING HOLE AS THE MINUTES TICK BY...



FAR ACROSS TOWN, THE MOTOR OF THE BLUE CONVERTIBLE HUMS AS ALEX, AT THE WHEEL, GUIDES IT OUT OF THE LOT...



THE HOLLOW BOOM OF CLEM'S SPADE STRIKING THE COFFIN ECHOES ACROSS THE DESERTED CEMETERY...



CLEM SLIPS THE SHARP EDGE OF THE CROW-BAR UNDER THE LID AND PASSES DOWN! THE COFFIN SHUDDERS... THEN THE LID GIVES WAY...



GEORGE, GASPING FOR AIR, COVERED WITH PERSPIRATION, SITS BOLT UPRIGHT IN THE COFFIN! CLEM'S EYES WIDEN... AS HE SCREAMS...



ALEX, IN HIS NICE NEW SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE, IS HITTING EIGHTY AS HE LEAVES TOWN ON THE ROAD THAT SKIRTS THE CEMETERY.



HEH, HEH! HOPE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE IN THERE, GEORGE!

SUDDENLY, TWO FIGURES LOOM UP BEFORE HIM, SCAMPERING ALONG THE ROAD.



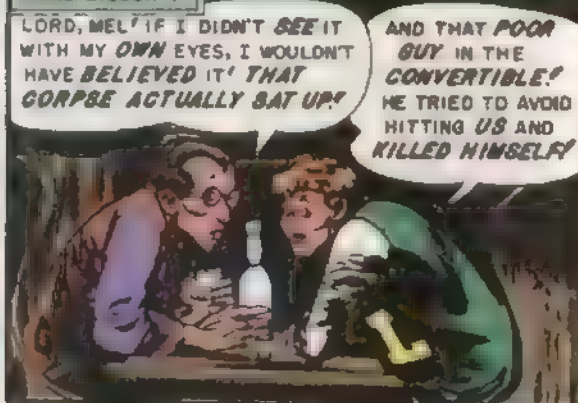
LOOK OUT!

ALEX SWERVES TO AVOID HITTING THE FRIGHTENED, RACING STUDENTS! THE CAR HURTLES ACROSS THE ROAD TOWARD THE CEMETERY FENCE...



EEEEAAAAAGH!

LATER, IN A DARK CORNER OF A LOCAL BAR, SID AND MEL COMPOSE THEMSELVES WITH SEVERAL SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR.



LORD, MEL! IF I DIDN'T SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES, I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT! THAT CORPSE ACTUALLY SAT UP!

AND THAT POOR GUY IN THE CONVERTIBLE! HE TRIED TO AVOID HITTING US AND KILLED HIMSELF!

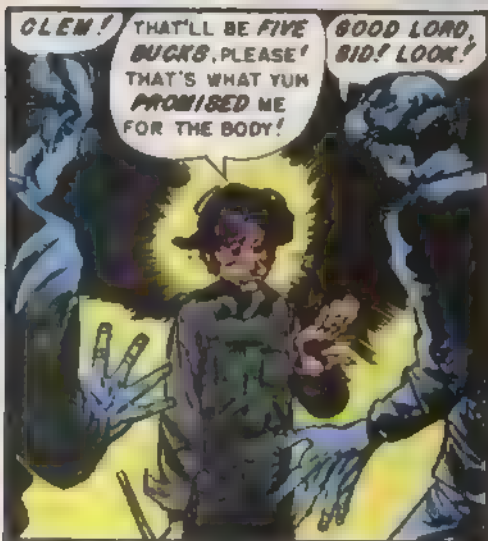
FINALLY, SID AND MEL RETURN TO THEIR ROOM! AS THEY OPEN THE DOOR...



THE LESS SAID ABOUT TONIGHT, THE BETTER!

GEE! I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO CLEM!

HERE I IS! I BEEN WAITIN' ON YUH!

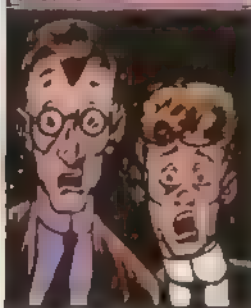


CLEM!

THAT'LL BE FIVE DUCKS, PLEASE! THAT'S WHAT YUH PROMISED ME FOR THE BODY!

GOOD LORD, SID! LOOK!

THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS STARE IN HORROR AT THE PROSTRATE BODY OF GEORGE ARKMAN STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR.. ITS HEAD CRUSHED FROM THE BLOW OF A GROW BAR.



HEH, HEH! YEP! OLD CLEM REALLY CAME ACROSS... BY GEORGE! AND SID AND MEL HAVE THE STIFF THEY NEEDED! AS FOR ALEX... WELL... HE'S PRETTY BLUE... FROM CAR PAINT! THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET ALL WRAPPED UP IN SOMETHING! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY FELLOW GHOULUNATIC, THE VAULT-KEEPER, WHO'S WAITING TO RELATE HIS TERROR-TALE! SEE YOU LATER WITH



HOW TO OBTAIN FROM ME! IT'S ALL COVERED IN MY COLUMN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! EVER BEEN *HYPNOTIZED*? NO? THEN YOU'LL LIKE THE *CHILLING YARN* I'M ABOUT TO SPIN! IT CONCERNS A *HYPNOTIST*... HIS *WIFE*... AND WELL, WHY NOT COME INTO *THE VAULT OF HORROR*... PULL UP THAT *COFFIN*... SIT YOURSELF UPON ITS *WORMY LID*... AND LISTEN! YOU ALL KNOW WHO I AM! YEP! *THE VAULT-KEEPER*! READY? THEN, I'LL BEGIN! I CALL THIS *HORROR TALE*...

ANTS IN HER TRANCE!



THE GUESTS AT THE DINNER PARTY TURNED AS THEIR WEALTHY HOSTESS, MRS JUSTINE FLEETWOOD, CLAPPED HER HANDS FOR ATTENTION! BEHIND HER STOOD A STRIKING DARK-HAIRED MAN WITH BLACK PIERCING EYES! BESIDE HIM, A NERVOUS FRAIL-LOOKING WOMAN FIDGETED WITH HER NECKLACE.

ALL RIGHT, MY FRIENDS! IF I CAN HAVE YOUR ATTENTION... I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU ALL! I'VE INVITED A FAMOUS PERSON TO ENTERTAIN... SOMEONE I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT! THIS... IS LEOPOLD MONETTI...

HOW EXCITING! HE'S THE AMAZING HYPNOTIST!



LEOPOLD MONETTI STEPPED FORWARD AND BOWED GRACEFULLY! THEN HE TURNED TO THE PALE THIN WOMAN AT HIS SIDE...

THIS IS MY WIFE...EVETTE! TONIGHT, AT YOUR CHARMING HOSTESS'S REQUEST, I WILL PRESENT FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT A DEMONSTRATION OF THE ASTOUNDING ART OF HYPNOTISM!

WILL YOU ALL PLEASE FIND SEATS!



THE GUESTS SCURRIED ABOUT DRAGGING CHAIRS TO AND FRO UNTIL THEY WERE ALL SEATED BEFORE THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS WIFE...

NOW THAT YOU ARE SETTLED I WILL BEGIN! MY WIFE HERE WILL BE MY *SUBJECT* IN THIS DEMONSTRATION! FIRST, I WILL PLACE HER INTO A *HYPNOTIC TRANCE*! ONCE PLACED UNDER THIS SPELL, SHE WILL *OBEY MY EVERY WISH*! ONLY AFTER I UTTER THE WORDS '*SNAP OUT OF IT*!' WILL SHE BE *REVIVED*!



LEOPOLD TURNED TO HIS FRAIL WIFE AND PASSED HIS HANDS OVER HER FACE SEVERAL TIMES! THEN HE BEGAN TO STARE INTO HER EYES, WHILE MURMURING INCOHERENT PHRASES! SOON, EVETTE'S EYES GLAZED...HER BODY GREW RIGID...

THERE! EVETTE IS NOW IN A HYPNOTIC TRANCE! HER *WILL* IS *MINE TO COMMAND*!



THE MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! IT HAS FULL CONTROL OVER EVERY PART OF THE BODY! NORMALLY, WE DO NOT FULLY USE THE POWERS OF THE MIND! BUT, UNDER HYPNOTISM, THESE POWERS ARE BROUGHT INTO PLAY! FOR EXAMPLE...



MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE

EVETTE! *CRY!*



EVETTE'S WAXEN FEATURES SAGGED! SHE SIGHED PITIFULLY AND THEN BEGAN TO WHIMPER! HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS! THEY SPILLED OVER HER EYELIDS AND RAN DOWN HER CHEEKS...

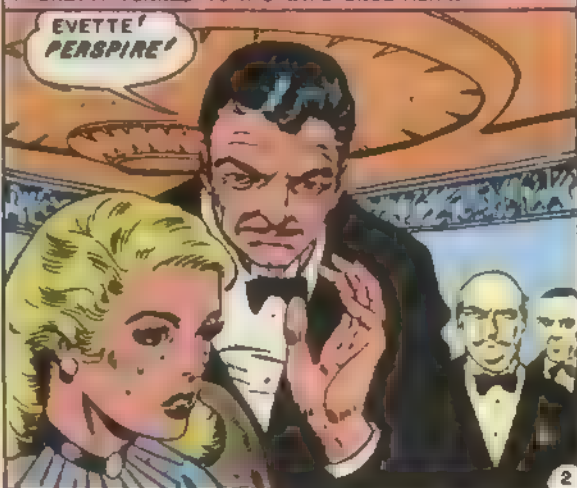
YOU SEE! AT MY COMMAND, *ASTOUNDING!* SHE *INSTANTLY OBEYS!*

INCREDIBLE!



MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE ONCE AGAIN

EVETTE! *PERSPIRE!*



SMALL BEADS OF PERSPIRATION BURST FROM THE PORES IN EVETTE'S SALLOW FACE! SOON HER ENTIRE COUNTENANCE WAS SHINING WET.

SO... AT MY WORD! PERSPIRATION!

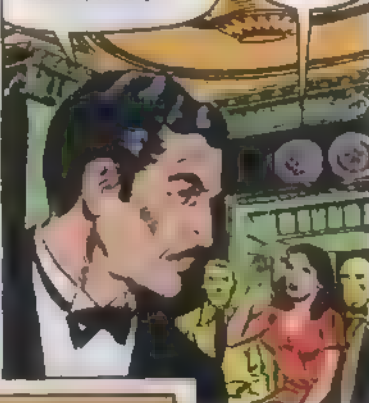
UNBELIEVABLE!

FANTASTIC!



AND NOW, FOR MY FINAL DEMONSTRATION! IS THERE ONE AMONG YOU WHO IS EITHER A PHYSICIAN OR HAS A KNOWLEDGE OF MEDICINE?

I WAS A NURSE!



GOOD! WILL YOU KINDLY COME UP! I AM GOING TO DO SOMETHING THAT SCIENCE CLAIMS IS IMPOSSIBLE! I AM GOING TO COMMAND EVETTE TO STOP HER HEART FROM BEATING!

WHAT?

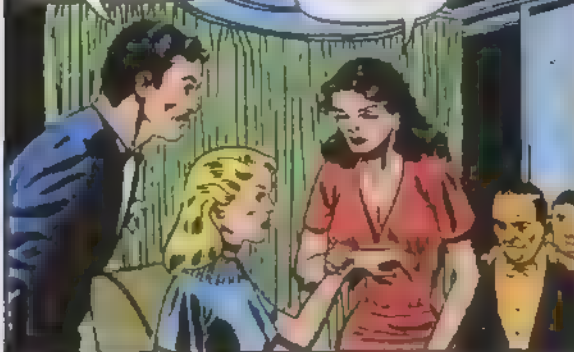
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!



THE LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED CAME UP TO THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS ENTRANCED WIFE...

KINDLY FEEL MY WIFE'S PULSE, IF YOU WILL!

I... I FEEL IT! IT'S RAPID... STRONG...



DO NOT BE ALARMED, YOUNG LADY! I HAVE MERELY TO UTTER THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT' AND MY WIFE WILL BE RELEASED FROM HER HYPNOTIC TRANCE AND HER HEART WILL BEAT ONCE MORE!

WELL, SAY IT THEN, FOR GOD'S SAKE! HURRY!



ALL RIGHT, EVETTE! STOP YOUR HEART!

GASP! HER PULSE! IT'S STOPPED! SHE'S DEAD!



SNAP OUT OF IT, EVETTE!

HUH! UH? WHERE AM... I... OH...

THANK THE LORD!



THE COLOR RETURNED TO EVETTE'S CHEEKS AND SHE MOVED ABOUT THE GUESTS CHATTING GAYLY! MEANWHILE, LEOPOLD HAD ENGAGED HIS VOLUNTARY ASSISTANT IN CONVERSATION...

YOU SEEMED WORRIED FOR A WHILE, MISS.. MISS...

APPLETON! SELMA APPLETON! YES! I WAS!

YOU WERE IMPRESSED, THEN, MISS APPLETON? IT IS...MISS?

YES! IT'S MISS APPLETON! OH, I WAS IMPRESSED! VERY! YOU'RE WONDERFUL!

PERHAPS I CAN SEE YOU TOMORROW. SAY FOR LUNCH! WE CAN TALK FURTHER... ON HYPNOTISM!

OH, I'D BE DELIGHTED! MAKE IT TWELVE-THIRTY? THE BLUE CANDLE?

THE NEXT DAY, SELMA APPLETON MET LEOPOLD MONETTI FOR LUNCH! IN THE DIMNESS OF THE CANDLE-LIT CAFE...HIS EYES BORED INTO HERS AS HE CONFESSED...

I HAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SELMA! LAST NIGHT, WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU...I KNEW IMMEDIATELY! IT TOOK ONLY A MOMENT...

P. PLEASE, LEOPOLD! SOMEONE WILL SEE US!

LET THEM! I MUST TELL YOU! I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU! YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! EXCITING! DESIRABLE! I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU THE MOMENT I SAW YOU!

BUT, LEOPOLD! YOUR WIFE! YOU... YOU'RE MARRIED!

AND IF I WERE NOT MARRIED? WOULD YOU CONSIDER...?

I...I DON'T KNOW! I...I LIKE YOU! I... I THINK SO! YES! I THINK I WOULD!

AND SO, A SECRET LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN SELMA AND LEOPOLD BEGAN! THEY SAW EACH OTHER OFTEN AFTER THAT! FINALLY... ONE NIGHT, AT SELMA'S APARTMENT...

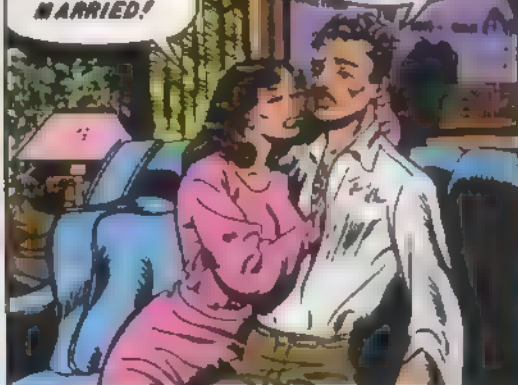
IT CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, LEO! THIS MEETING SECRETLY...BEHIND LOCKED DOORS...IN DARK STREETS...

WHAT CAN I DO, SELMA? EVETTE WOULD NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE!

SELMA SLIPPED DOWN BESIDE LEOPOLD! THERE WAS A WILD GLEAM IN HER EYES...

IF... IF SHE WERE DEAD, LEO, WE COULD BE MARRIED!

YOU MEAN... KILL HER?



IT COULD LOOK LIKE A **NATURAL DEATH!** YOU REMEMBER HOW WE MET? YOU WERE DEMONSTRATING HOW YOU COULD **COMMAND EVETTE TO STOP HER HEART...**

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO **FELT HER PULSE!** YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS DEAD!



EXACTLY! ANY DOCTOR WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SO! YOU REMEMBER YOU ASSURED ME...

I TOLD YOU THAT THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT' WOULD REVIVE HER! THEY ALWAYS DO! WE'VE USED THE SAME ONES FOR YEARS!

SUPPOSE YOU USED OTHER WORDS! SUPPOSE YOU 'FAILED' TO REVIVE HER!

SHE'D BE DEAD!



AND YOU'D BE **FREE!** THE POLICE WOULD CALL IT AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT! THEY COULDN'T PROVE 'INTENT!' YOU'D BE **SMILE-HEARTED!**

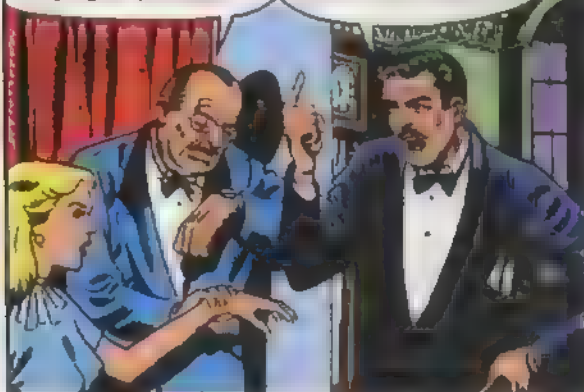
YES! VERY! I'LL DO IT, SELMA!



THE NEXT NIGHT, LEOPOLD AND EVETTE HAD AN ENGAGEMENT TO DEMONSTRATE HYPNOTISM! LEOPOLD HAD MADE UP HIS MIND...

YES! I FEEL HER PULSE! IT'S **VERY STRONG!**

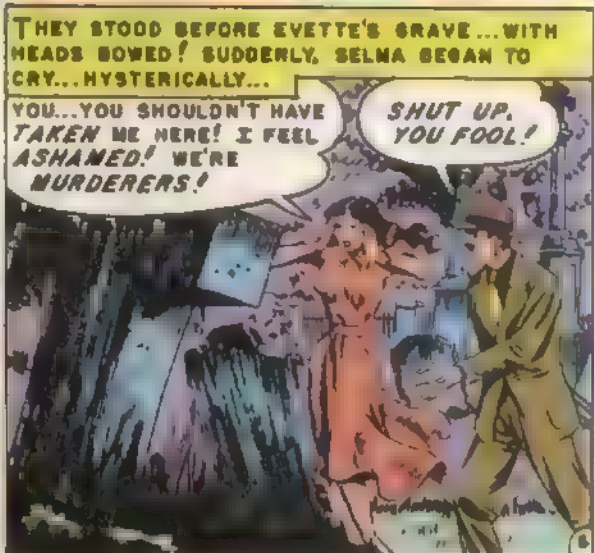
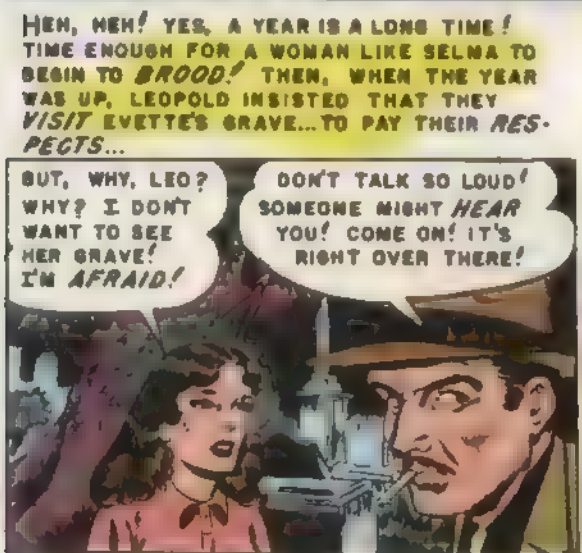
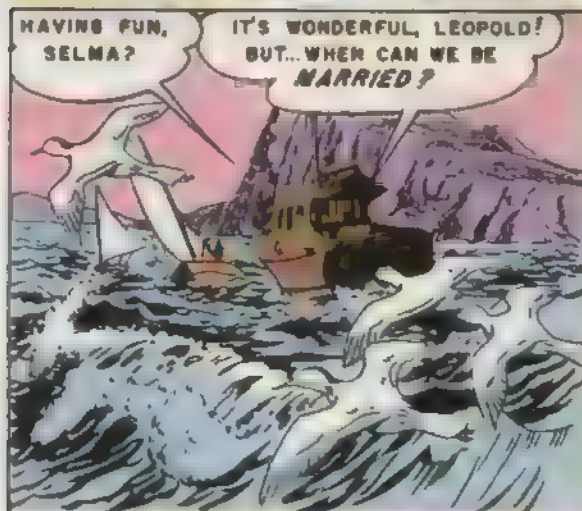
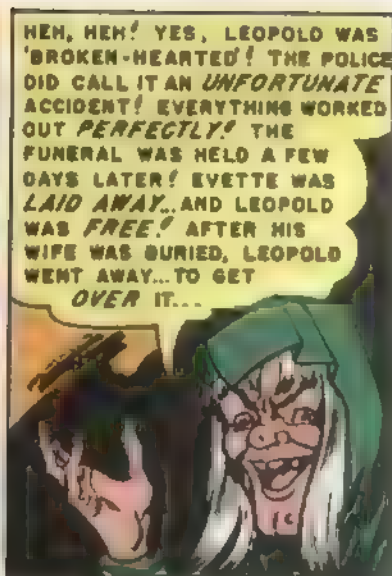
ALL RIGHT, EVETTE! STOP YOUR HEART!



GOOD LORD! HER PULSE HAS STOPPED! WAKE HER UP, MAN!

WAKE UP, EVETTE! ER... I SAID WAKE UP, EVETTE!





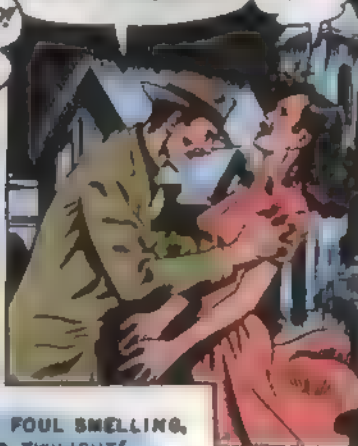
SELMA BEGAN TO RAVE! HER
SCREAMING VOICE ECHOED
ACROSS THE HEADSTONES...

WE'RE MURDERERS! MURDERERS!
THANK GOD THE PLACE
IS DESERTED!
NO ONE WILL HEAR HERE!



LEOPOLD GRASPED SELMA'S
SHOULDERS! HE SHOOK HER
ROUGHLY.

Snap out of it! You're hysterical!
SOB.. SOB..

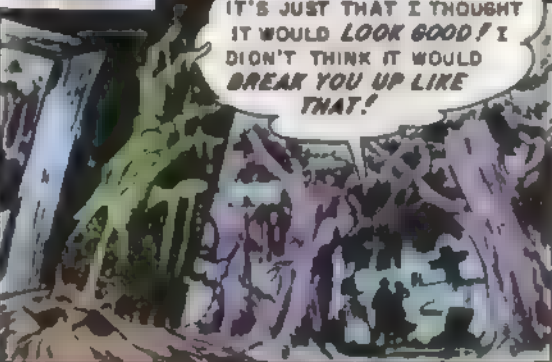


THEN THEY TURNED TO GO! AS THEY
MADE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE ROWS OF
GRAVES, A SMALL FISSURE APPEARED IN
THE MOUND BELOW EVETTE'S TOMB-
STONE! THE GRAVE WAS CRACKING
OPEN.

SOB.. SOB.. YOU WERE
RIGHT, SELMA!
WE SHOULDN'T
HAVE COME!

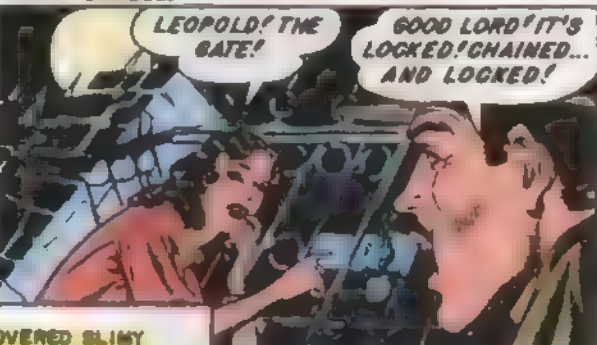


A ROTTED HAND, CRAWLING AND FOUL SMELLING,
REACHED UP INTO THE GATHERING TWILIGHT!
LEOPOLD AND SELMA WERE JUST DISAPPEARING INTO
THE DUSK.



IT'S JUST THAT I THOUGHT
IT WOULD LOOK GOOD! I
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD
BREAK YOU UP LIKE
THAT!

LEOPOLD AND SELMA REACHED THE CEMETERY GATE!
IT TOWERED ABOVE THEM... RISING TWELVE FEET INTO
THE FALLING DARKNESS... ENDING AT THE TOP IN RAZOR-
SHARP SPIKES...



LEOPOLD! THE
GATE!

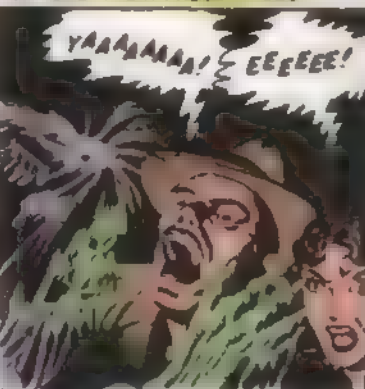
GOOD LORD! IT'S
LOOKED! CHAINED...
AND LOCKED!

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SOUND
BEHIND THE TRAPPED COUPLE!
THE NAUSEATING ODOR OF DECAY
AND PUTRESCENCE BURNED THEIR
NOSTRILS! THEY TURNED...



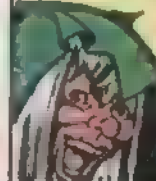
OH, MY GOD!
EVETTE!

THE MAGGOT-COVERED SLIMY
THING LUMBERED TOWARD THEM!
BITS OF ROTTED FLESH FELL
FROM ITS CHALKY BONES! CLOUDS
OF UNCLE TUCKER'S EARTH SMOGGED
FROM ITS MOLDY CLOTHES! IT
REACHED OUT A DECAYED HAND
TOWARD THEM... PASSING IT
BEFORE THEIR PALED FACES



YAAAAAAA! EEEEE!

HEH, HEH! THEY FOUND SELMA AND
LEO THE NEXT MORNING! FUNNY
THING! THERE WASN'T A MARK ON
EITHER OF THEM! THE CORONER
SAID IT LOOKED LIKE HEART-
FAILURE! THEIR EYES WERE
BULGING OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS
THOUGH! HE SAID IT WAS AS IF
THEY'D BEEN HYPNOTIZED! HEH,
HEH! WELL! WE KNOW DIFFERENT.
EH? A BETTER NAME FOR IT WOULD
BE 'CORPSENOTIZED'! OH, BY THE
WAY! YOUR EYES WILL BULGE FROM
THEIR SOCKETS WHEN YOU SEE BACK
ISSUES! THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S
CORNER, WHICH
FOLLOWS THE
TEXT, TELLS YOU
HOW TO GET
YOURS!





THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppl

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear "CRYPTY" (Crypt-Keeper)

I know your nickname is "CRYPTY." I wanted to say that I loved the story "Trapped" in VAULT 10 (I'm not writing good because I'm writing with A PEN THAT DOESN'T HAVE INK!) I loved the line when Marty was all in the sticky stuff and says, "IT...IT'S LIKE FLY PAPER!" I imagined Marty's voice like a New Orleans type.

Ramiro J. Roman

Glendale CA

Oui, y'all. Get some ink, my old eyes aren't what they used to be!

—CK

Do you and the Vault-Keeper ever fight? Sinefarty.

Chad J. Barr

Peachtree City, GA

Sure, we fight—we fight The Old Witch!

—OW

It's me. DARK DEMON Who was the Crypt-Keeper before you? Do you have to pay taxes and how old are you?

Dark Demon

address unknown

I am the original Keeper! None authentic without this signature: X! I am exempt from death, and I am exempt from taxes! Eat your heart out!

—CK

I'm an average-sized fan who loves your stories as did my dad when he was a kid. "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" definitely ruled. That was the weirdest story ever written. Who wrote it? Do you have any background on it? I also liked the one about the leisure class kids ending up with leprosy. Who's the probe who wrote that one? It was cool, and ruled too. Another one that ruled was the one with the poor sister and her brother who turns into glop. That one was so grim it made Kafka look like Dick Clark. Other than EC I like the early, early SPIDERMAN comics. PLASTICMAN is also cool. But if I had to have one thing to say, it would be, "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" ruled! As does the Crypt-Keeper. He's boss and George!

Nat Hirsh

Lakeville, CT

And, I'm gone, besides! Let's see—we're into the second year of EC's New Trend, Feldstein is doing covers only, the art is by Wood with no particular reason to believe Harrison was involved; we can assume Feldstein wrote the script altho the psychic angle is less mechanistic than lots of Feldstein. —CK

How you been hanging? Probably at the end of a rope, ha, ha. You can print my address

Adam Griebbaum

4871 Cleveland RD
Wooster OH 44891

Yes, ha-ha. I got noose for you; when at the end of your rope, keep your trap (door) shut!

—CK

"ABRA CADAVER"

I just got issue #10, and you guys sure didn't disappoint me

"Drawn And Quartered!" Excellent! Oh, and in your painting at the beginning isn't that the werewolf from "By The Fright Of The Silvery Moon!" in the upper right-hand corner? "The Borrowed Body" Good plot, but not as well carried-out as I would have expected. "Indian Burial Mound" As much as I hate to say it, I could not get into

this story. This was the first EC story I've ever seen without at least one exclamation point. After reading it, I can understand why "Political Pull!" Not as good as "Drawn And Quartered!" but excellent just the same

As for "Abra Cadaver," it's about a doctor whose career is ruined when his brother's cruel practical joke gives him a heart attack. He gets back at his brother by killing him and giving him a voodoo drug to keep his brain alive. He then pretends to cut his brother's brain out as a practical joke. The joke gives the brother a heart attack, and kills him. So, can ya ID it for me? Keep printing my address

Myron James

RR 4 BOX 141
Rockville IN 47872

I don't have to ID it, 'cause...

—CK

About the new CRYPT movie, "Demon Knight" see this film! I give [it] two (severed) thumbs up!

I wish people would stop complaining about the HBO show TV and comics are too different mediums and so of course the stories have to be a little different. True the show goes too far sometimes, but for the most part I think it is worthy of its title. I am certain that you and the HBO CK are the same—after all, if you were an old man in the fifties, by now you would probably be a rotting corpse.

Finally I have a helpful note for Myron James, who asked in which issue the story "Abra Cadaver" could be found. You replied that you never ran a story with that title. This is because the story was originally called "Dead Right!" HBO had already used that title with a completely different story. They obviously wanted to use the original story later on, so they changed the title to "Abra Cadaver." You can print my address.

David Lowery II

1016 Grosse PT
Irving, TX 75061

Now the question is, what is the plot of the HBO "Dead Right?" (Our "Dead Right!" ran in CRYPT #37—will be our #21.)

—CK

MORE HBO STUFF

Are the covers you use now the same covers that were used on the original comics? Which SHOCK issue will (or has) reprint(ed) "Carrion Death!"? I saw that one on HBO and loved it and would like to read it.

Tyler Compton

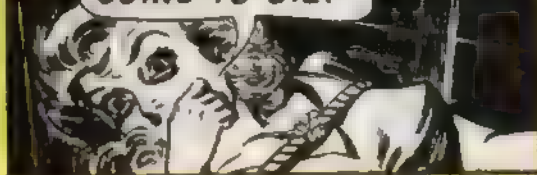
Folsom CA

Yup, original covers. You'll find "Carrion Death!" in SHOCK 9, which is available from us as a back issue (art by the great Reed Crandall).

—CK

NEXT ISSUE

"I'M SUFFOCATING! THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING! THE BUZZING...I...I...I'M GOING TO DIE!"



I always tape your TV show. My dad loves it and so do I. I watched the Santa Claus one on Saturday night. I loved it! I want that one to come on every Saturday night!

Tiffany Wise

Stafford, VA

And on tape, it can!

—CK

There was a "Crypt" episode with Larry (L.A. Law) Drake about an escaped mental patient dressed as Santa Claus who terrorizes a winter cabin, which magazine is it in? There was an episode starring Lou Diamond Phillips and Priscilla Presley called "Oil's Well that Ends Well," where can I find it? Why aren't there "Crypt"s on videos? I have to watch the crappy re-runs that are toned down! Finally, why is the cable show going off? I saw a preview for it in a magazine.

James C. Puckett

Houston, TX

I've been assuming the bogus Santa is from "...And All Through the House..." VAULT #35 (will be our VAULT 24) and "Oil's Well" will be in CRYPT #34 (our CRYPT 18, but also in 64-pg RCP CRYPT #2 available now!). The other questions are for cooler heads than mine!

—CK

I have CRYPT comics and I watch your show on HBO and FOX, but I like the ones on HBO better because they don't leave the good parts out.

Jack Conner, age 12

St. Charles, MO

Makes them kinda crappy, do you think? Or, does it make them more widely entertaining?

—CK

I am very excited about the HBO "Tales from the Crypt" season finale that airs on February 15, "You, Murderer." It was a brilliant idea to have Humphrey Bogart "resurrected" for it.

My favorite episodes of your show are "Well Cooked Hams" and "The Thing from the Grave." Please print my address.

Chad Kushkins (CK), 11

E Grand CYN LN
Coran, NY 11727

I am of two minds on computer "resurrections;" at least the producers of TV's "Crypt" know the significance of the images they'll be tampering with. Better than soft drink guys!

—CK

I have collected CRYPT Volume 1 and 2. If you don't really like The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch why do you let those morons be in your comic book? Please print my address. I would like to have a pen pal.

Alexander Orozco

10501 Sam Migueltave
South Gate, CA 90280

I look so good by comparison!

—CK

I love your stories. Me and my big brother collect your comics. I would like a pen pal.

Derek Drake

681 E Garden RD
Vineland, NJ

CRYPT 10 was awesome! "Drawn and Quartered!" was the best story in the mag! "The Borrowed Body!" made no sense to me—how do they switch bodies? "Indian Burial Mound" was the classic plot 'man does something mean and dies for it.' "Political Puff" was exciting, but a little predictable. Please print my address.

Brandon Hendrix

POB 117
Broken Bow, OK 74728

I read your comics and watch your shows. I enjoy the blood, gore and murder. I enjoy drawing comics of my own. I have very few friends but the friends I have love CRYPT. Could I be in your fan club?

Dustin (Crypt, Jr.) Price

Coushatta, LA

Three of the most vocal fan-groups are: HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR, 30 Ivy DR, Midvale, UT 84047; THE EC REGISTER, Abner Oon Productions,

8801 Atlantic AV, Margate City, NJ 08402 and THE INTERNATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB, 5947 Colgate ST, Philadelphia, PA 19120.

—CK

Do you have Crypt POGS? If you do give me some or tell me where they are.

Greg Miller, age 9

Reisterstown, MD

I had the chickenPOGS ones. Didn't like it; all that scratching (darn those chickens)! No, you got me. But I show up in the damndest places. Keep lookin'!

—CK

Waz up? I was in New York last night around 11:00 and I saw the comic store and I walked out with the first 5 issues just like that. What kind of music do you like?

Keith Elphick

Upper Montclair, NJ

I assume you paid for those comics before walking! Music to my ears is the ringing of a cash register when you buy EC comics!

—CK

I saw the "Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight" movie last week. It was horrible, terrifying, gruesome, disgusting, and nightmare-inducing. I loved it! Please print my address. I would like to hear from other TFC fans.

Darrell S. Haslett, age 22

916 W McClure
Peoria, IL 61604-3360

[Re: the CRYPT B locol]. What about the wrinkles? Hey, wanna make somethin' of it? Rot long 'n prosper.

Curt 'Crypt' Hovis

Marion, IL

All I'm saying is if I had enuf wrinkles, I could make a whole 'nother Old Witch!

—CK

Why don't you wear your hood like everyone else?

Mark Plekietnik

Utica, NY

Got not hood, got not hat, got no cauldron, got no bet! Got no sock, got no shoe; so depressed, my robe is blue! (Ain't you sorry you asked?)

—CK

Only getting one EC comic each month wasn't enough. So I decided to subscribe to your others! Are you going to make new stories beside reprints? Do you need help with them, I am your man. Print address. I would like a Crypt pen pal.

Zac Gale

2324 Willard ST
Saginaw, MI 48602

No plans for new material. Be sure your pen has ink [see R. Roman, above]!

—CK

NEXT ISSUE



I have sat quietly in my dark, smelly corner since the Gladstone reprint era. I was content with the EC comics until now. It's a sad thing, but I can't stand it any longer! Coming out of the dark, I have come to display just how angry I am at the appalling letters your other fans write. What a dirty game they play, for everyone should know that I am your one and only #1 fan. I bow at your feet and am at your service. Now that I've let the world know this, I can crawl back to my dark corner and die. Don't anybody dare challenge me! Thank you

Kristian Mroczko

Whitefield, NH

ANOTHER MEDIUM HEARD FROM

I have a "Tales from the Crypt" audio tape called "Have a Scary Little Christmas!"

What issue will "Auntie, It's Coal Inside!" appear in? I can't find your cards at any store. I like the story "Indian Burial Mound" [CRYPT 10]. And please print my address.

Patrick Burkett

622 S 22nd ST
Terra Haute, IN 47803

"Auntie" is in CRYPT #30—will be CRYPT 14 quite soon. (How do you get to be Anti-social? Certainly don't be Uncle 'Legial.' Well, I thought it was funny.) Get our cards from us, \$1.50 per pack p.p.d. —CK

THEIR FAVE STORIES

I don't usually read comic books, but I couldn't resist checking [yours] out. My favorite story was "Drawn and Quartered!". Please print my address so that pen pal[s] can write to me. I'm a slightly morbid 16 year old girl and a junior in high school. You're pretty cool for a dead guy, CK!

Jocelyn Spitzer

1908 Rugby RD
Champaign, IL 61821

"Well-Cooked Hams!" Jack Davis has some real talent. Very good and I would recommend it. "Madam Bluebeard": One of the best stories I have ever read. "Return!": Creepy in a way. "Horror! Head...It Off!" One of the worst stories I ever read. "Lower Berth!" Interesting story with a surprise ending. "This Trick'll Kill You!": Kind of boring in the beginning, but then it got better. "The Switch": Another good one by the Crypt-Keeper

Peter Keppler, age 11

Nesconset, NY

My favorite stories are "Lower Berth!", [CRYPT "33"] "Scared to Death!", "Strop! You're Killing Me!" [CRYPT "37"] and "Taint the Meat...It's the Humanity!" [CRYPT "32"] Tell The Vault-Keeper that I like "Pearly to Dead" [CRYPT "40"]. Tell The Old Witch that I like the tale "Poetic Justice!" [HAUNT 12]

Mike Lowenstein, age 9½

Newton, MA

One of my favorite stories is "Death's Turn!". CRYPT #6. You have my permission to print my address so I can have pen pals.

Orlando Garcia

1729 W Superior
Chicago, IL 60622

"Madness at Manderville" in CRYPT 2 and "Bats in my Beifry!" in CRYPT 8. Please don't chop this letter

Alena A. Reiston

Detroit, MI

My favorite comic stories are "Sinkhole!" and "Dying to Lose Weight!" [VAULT 7], "Daddy Lost His Head!" [VAULT 8], "Scared to Death!" [CRYPT 8] and "The Irony of Death!" [HAUNT 8]. My favorite ones on TV are "The Tattoo" ["...On a Dead Man's Chest!", HAUNT 12?] and "What's Cooking, Doc?" ["What's Cooking?", HAUNT 12?]

Matt Smith

Utica, NY

IAHF (I also heard from):

S. Adams (Happy Birthday!)
John Brown
Dwayne L. Heath
Carl Pietrantonio
Brandon O'Donnell
Paul O'Leary
name unknown

Edison, NJ
Harriman, TX
Dearborn HTS, MI
Laredo, TX
Pittsburgh, PA
Needham, MA
Gays, IL

WOW!

LOOK AT THIS!

In the 70s, East Coast Comix reprinted 12 EC comics in facsimile form. Certain issues have been harder to get for years now. We have found an **EXTREMELY LIMITED** quantity of their 3rd thru 10th issues. In addition, issues 11 and 12 are listed here at the same price currently on our mail order form.

We particularly recommend #9, that issue of **TWO-FISTED TALES** is one of the greatest individual comic books of all time!

When ordering please identify as **EAST COAST ISSUE #** (for example, **EAST COAST #3**). Add \$5. per order S&H (\$10. outside US).

#3 (SHOCK #12)	#4 (HAUNT #12)
#5 (WEIRD FANTASY #13)	#6 (CRIME #25)
#7 (VAULT #26)	#10 (HAUNT #23)
#9 (TWO-FISTED #34)	

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The above are \$10. each.

Also available this month are **WEIRD SCIENCE** and **SHOCK**. Watch for **VAULT**, **WEIRD FANTASY** and **TWO-FISTED** next month. Don't forget **HAUNT**, **FRONTLINE COMBAT** and **CRIME**. Get them at your local comic book shop or **SUBSCRIBE** (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, \$3 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #3, \$1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, \$2 each. Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

Write to:
CRYPT
RUS COCHRAN
POB 489
WEST PLAINS, MO 63075

THIS COMIC REPRINTS

TALES FROM THE CRYPT "#28" (#12, FEB/MAR 52)

COVER by Al Feldstein

"Bargain in Death"
"Ants in Her Trance"
"A-Corny Story"
"The Ventriloquists' Dummy!"

Jack Davis
Joe Orlando
Jack Kamen
Graham Ingels

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street addresses and ZIP code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the individual letter.

YOU'LL SHUDDER OVER THIS ONE
EVEN THOUGH YOU MIGHT CALL IT...

A-CORNY STORY



ARNOLD EVERETTE STRODE DOWN THE AISLE BETWEEN THE ROWS OF DESKS THAT LINED HIS OFFICE, GLANCING FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. HE SMILED TO HIMSELF AS HE NOTED THE OCCUPANT OF EACH. YES! THINGS WERE WORKING OUT FINE! THERE WAS ONLY ONE MAN LEFT. ONE MAN TO GET RID OF! OLD MAN PIETRO! ARNOLD STOPPED BEFORE THE GREYING-AGED CARLO PIETRO'S DESK AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE GAUNT FIGURE.

ER. WILL YOU SEE WHY
ME IN MY OFFICE, MR. PIETRO? SAY TEN MINUTES?

WHY
YES, SIR!

ARNOLD RETURNED TO HIS LUXURIOUS PRIVATE OFFICE! HE WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR PIETRO'S KNOCK! AFTER A WHILE IT CAME. TWO TIMID RAPS! ARNOLD BID HIM ENTER.

YOU WANTED TO
SEE ME, MR. EVERETTE?

YES, MR. PIETRO! COME IN! SIT DOWN!



THE WRINKLED OLD MAN SAT DOWN NERVOUSLY. ARNOLD STUDIED HIM, NOTED HIS TREMBLING BONEY HANDS, HIS GRIM SKULL-LIKE FACE...

I'VE INSTRUCTED THE CASHIER TO ISSUE YOU A CHECK FOR TWO WEEKS' PAY IN ADVANCE. MR. PIETRO? I'M SORRY... BUT I'M FORCED TO LET YOU GO...

BUT, WHY, SIR? DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?



NO, PIETRO! IT'S NOT *THAT*! IT'S JUST THAT YOU'RE *TOO OLD*! I WANT ONLY *YOUNG* MEN WORKING FOR EVERETTE AND SON!

BUT, MR. EVERETTE! I'VE BEEN HERE *TWENTY YEARS*! I WORKED FOR YOUR FATHER BEFORE YOU!



THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW! MY FATHER IS DEAD! THERE IS NO ROOM FOR SENTIMENT IN BUSINESS! I WANT NO OLD MEN WORKING FOR ME! THEY'RE SLOW-TIRE EASILY.

PLEASE! I HAVE NO PLACE TO GO... NO ONE TO TURN TO!

DON'T YOU HAVE A *FAMILY*, CARLO?

NO! THEY ARE ALL BACK IN *HAITI*! I LEFT THEM TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO TO COME TO WORK IN AMERICA!

WELL, WHY NOT GO BACK TO THEM? A MAN YOUR AGE SHOULD RETIRE ANYWAY!

PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT! I ONLY HOPE THAT WHEN YOU ARE OLD, YOU ARE NOT TREATED THIS WAY!



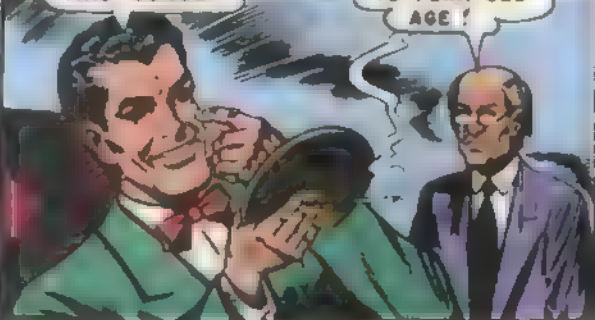
ARNOLD TURNED AWAY FROM THE WRETCHED OLD MAN AND GLANCED INTO THE MIRROR! EXCEPT FOR A FEW WORRY LINES ACROSS HIS FOREHEAD, HE SCARCELY LOOKED HIS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS...

DON'T WORRY, CARLO! I'LL MAKE SURE I'M NOT DEPENDENT ON ANYONE WHEN THAT TIME COMES!

SOME OF US ARE NOT AS FORTUNATE! YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FEAR OLD AGE!

NOT WITH *MY* DOUGH, CARLO! BUT... I'M A *BUSY* MAN! YOU CAN PICK UP YOUR CHECK ON THE WAY OUT! GOOD-BAY!

GOOD-BYE, MR. EVERETTE! PERHAPS YOUR *LOVE* OF *YOUTH*, AND *CONTEMPT* FOR *OLD AGE* WILL *CHANGE* IN THE FUTURE! WE SHALL SEE!



CARLO PIETRO LEFT THE OFFICES OF EVERETTE AND SON AND NEVER RETURNED! ARNOLD HIRED A YOUNG MAN TO TAKE HIS PLACE, AND CARLO WAS SOON FORGOTTEN! BUT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER... IN HAITI... WHERE THE AGING PIETRO HAD GONE...

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH VODOO, OLD MAN? WHY DO YOU COME TO ME?

I WANT SOMETHING FOR ONE WHO LOVES YOUTH TOO MUCH... TO TEACH HIM A LESSON!



IT WAS ALMOST TWO MONTHS AFTER ARNOLD HAD FIRED CARLO PIETRO THAT THE CRATE ARRIVED! ARNOLD SURVEYED IT ON THE REAR TERRACE OF HIS PALATIAL ESTATE...

WHAT IN THE WORLD COULD IT BE, JEEVES? IS THERE A RETURN ADDRESS?

YES, SIR! IT COMES FROM HAITI... A CARLO PIETRO SENT IT!



THE CRATE STOOD ABOUT SEVEN FEET HIGH! ARNOLD SCOWLED AT IT...

PIETRO, EN? WELL! MIGHT AS WELL OPEN IT AND SEE WHAT IT IS!



JEEVES, THE BUTLER, PRIED THE SIDES OF THE CRATE LOOSE AND THEY FELL AWAY, REVEALING...

WHY, IT'S A SMALL TREE, SIR! NOW QUAIN'T! LOOK HOW GHARLED IT IS!

THERE'S A NOTE HANGING ON ONE OF ITS BRANCHES!



IT SAYS: DEAR MR. EVERETTE, IN MY NATIVE LAND THIS TREE IS WORSHIPPED BY THE UNEDUCATED! THEY BELIEVE THAT IT CAN WARD OFF OLD AGE! KNOWING HOW MUCH YOU DESPISE THAT NEVITABLE STATE, I SEND THIS VARIETY OF OAK TO YOU! PERHAPS IT WILL HELP!

CARLO PIETRO
SARCASTIC
OLD CODGER!



WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT, SIR?

HOW IN BLAZES SHOULD I KNOW? PLANT IT, I GUESS! IT'S AN INTERESTING TYPE OF TREE IN ANY CASE! YES! PLANT IT!



AND SO, WHILE ARNOLD EVERETTE WATCHED, HIS SERVANT DUG A HOLE NEAR THE GARDEN WALL AND PLANTED THE WEIRD GHARLED DWARF-TREE...

THAT'S A GOOD SPOT FOR IT! I CAN'T SEE IT FROM THE HOUSE, SO I WON'T BE REMINDED OF THE UGLY THING!



A WEEK WENT BY! THE BURDEN OF WORK THAT HAD GROWN SO HEAVY ON ARNOLD SEEMED LIGHTER, SOMEHOW! ARNOLD MOVED ABOUT BRISKLY, AND BEGAN TO FEEL MORE ENERGETIC...

GOOD MORNING, MR. EVERETTE! YOU'RE LOOKING WELL THIS MORNING!

I FEEL WELL THIS MORNING, JEEVES!



ARNOLD FOUND A DESIRE TO PLAY GOLF AGAIN. SOMETHING HE HADN'T DONE FOR YEARS...

GOOD SHOT, EVERETTE! RIGHT ON THE GREEN!

LORD! I HAVEN'T PLAYED LIKE THIS SINCE I WAS THIRTY!



EVEN HIS VISITS TO NIGHT CLUBS AND THEATERS WITH OLD FLAMES GREW MORE FREQUENT...

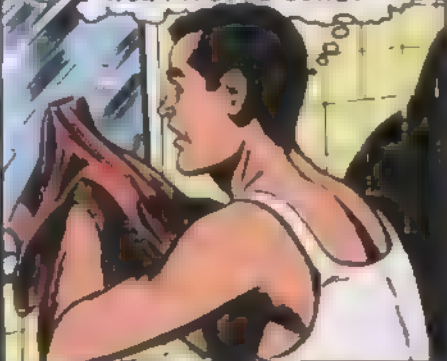
WHY, ARNOLD, YOU DEAR! YOU DANCE DIVINELY! THIS BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES... DOESN'T IT?

NOT SO OLD, HELEN! REMEMBER! THINK YOUNG... FEEL YOUNG!



THEN ONE MORNING ARNOLD STARED INTO THE MIRROR...

THAT'S FUNNY! I USED TO HAVE WRINKLES ON MY FOREHEAD AND UNDER MY EYES! NOW THEY'RE GONE!



IT WAS THAT VERY SAME MORNING THAT ARNOLD SAW THE TREE! HE'D DECIDED TO WALK TO THE STATION AND HAD NOTICED IT AS HE PASSED THE GARDEN WALL...

WHY, EVEN THE TREE PIETRO SENT ME LOOKS NICER! DOESN'T SEEM AS CROOKED AND GNARLED ANYMORE! AND THE LEAVES LOOK GREENER!



ARNOLD SMILED AND WALKED ON PAST! LIFE CERTAINLY WAS BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL LATELY! PROBABLY BEING SURROUNDED WITH YOUNG MEN AT THE OFFICE DID IT! THEN... SOME DAYS LATER...

H'MMM! FACE DOESN'T LOOK BAD THIS MORNING! THINK I CAN SQUEEZE BY WITHOUT A SHAVE TODAY!



ARNOLD WAS WHISTLING A MERRY TUNE AS HE NEARED THE GARDEN WALL BUT THE TUNE DIED TO A RUSH OF AIR THROUGH HIS LIPS AS HE SPIED THE TREE...

STRANGE! THE TREE SEEMS TO BE STRAIGHTENING UP! IT LOOKS... DIFFERENT! ALMOST... YOUNGER!

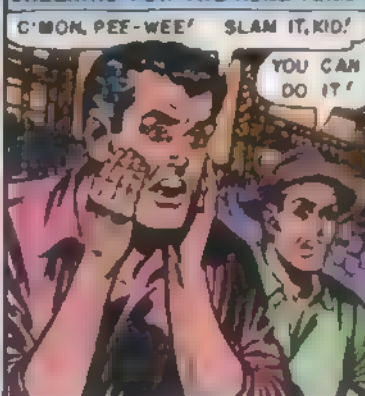


THE NEXT MORNING ARNOLD DIDN'T HAVE TO SHAVE AGAIN! OR THE FOLLOWING MORNING, FOR THAT MATTER.



GOOD LORD! MY BEARD! IT'S STOPPED GROWING!

ARNOLD DIDN'T GO TO THE OFFICE ONE DAY! HE'D MEANT TO, BUT A STRANGE DESIRE TOOK HOLD OF HIM! THE AFTERNOON FOUND HIM IN THE BLEACHERS ALONG WITH HUNDREDS OF TEEN-AGERS CHEERING FOR THE HOME TEAM.



C'MON, PEE-WEE! SLAM IT, KID!

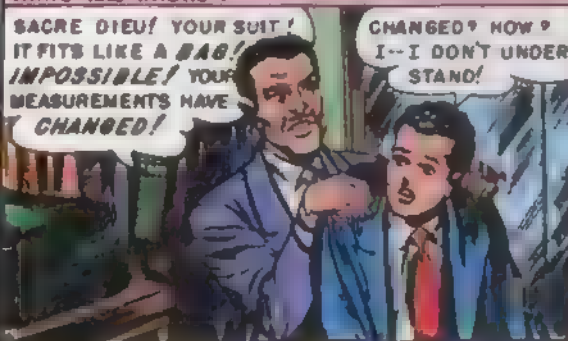
YOU CAN DO IT!

IN FACT, ARNOLD NEVER WENT TO THE OFFICE AGAIN! SOMEHOW, HE'D SUDDENLY LOST INTEREST.



AH, THIS IS THE LIFE! THE OL' SWIMMIN' HOLE! JUST LIKE WHEN I WAS A KID!

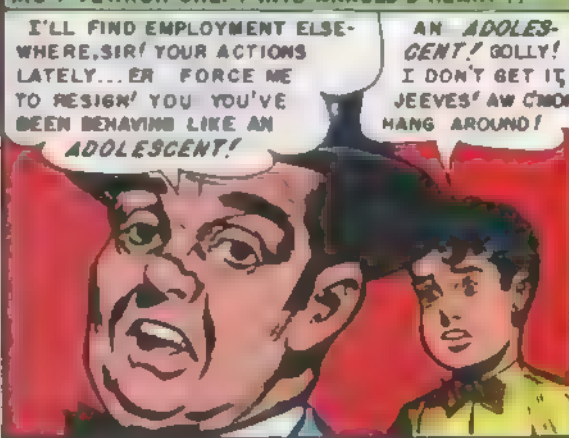
EXCEPT FOR THE CURIOUS FACT THAT HIS BEARD HAD STOPPED GROWING AND HIS WRINKLES HAD VANISHED, ARNOLD HAD NOT NOTICED THE HORRIBLE CHANGE THAT WAS TAKING PLACE! IT WASN'T UNTIL HIS TAILOR EXPLODED, THAT HE REALIZED SOMETHING WAS WRONG.



SACRE DIEU! YOUR SUIT! IT FITS LIKE A GAG! IMPOSSIBLE! YOUR MEASUREMENTS HAVE CHANGED!

CHANGED? HOW? I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

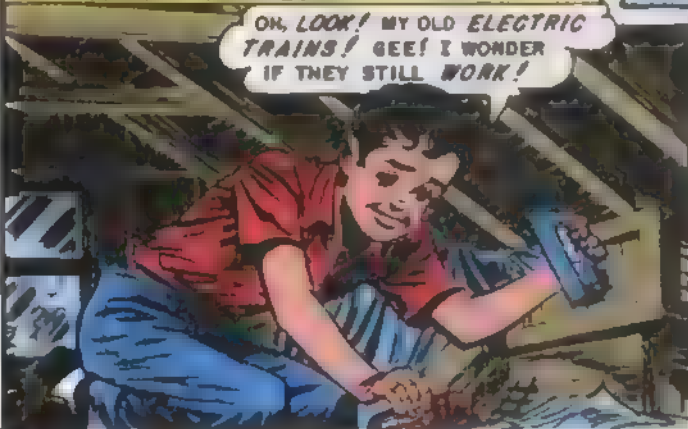
AND WHEN JEEVES ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS LEAVING, TERROR CREEPT INTO ARNOLD'S HEART.



I'LL FIND EMPLOYMENT ELSEWHERE, SIR! YOUR ACTIONS LATELY...ER FORCE ME TO RESIGN! YOU YOU'VE BEEN BEHAVING LIKE AN ADOLESCENT!

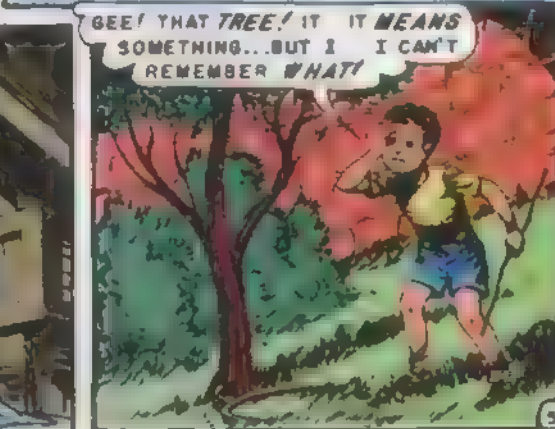
AN ADOLESCENT! GOLLY! I DON'T GET IT, JEEVES! AW C'MON, HANG AROUND!

ARNOLD LOCKED HIMSELF IN AFTER JEEVES LEFT! HE WAS FORCED TO SEARCH THROUGH OLD TRUNKS IN THE ATTIC FOR CLOTHES LONG SINCE PACKED AWAY TO WEAR! CHILD'S CLOTHES.



OH, LOOK! MY OLD ELECTRIC TRAINS! GEE! I WONDER IF THEY STILL WORK!

ONE DAY, AS ARNOLD SCAMPERED ABOUT THE GARDEN, HIS HOOP ROLLED OVER TO THE WALL! IT STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG, QUEERLY SHAPED TREE A SAPLING.



GEE! THAT TREE! IT IT MEANS SOMETHING...BUT I I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT!

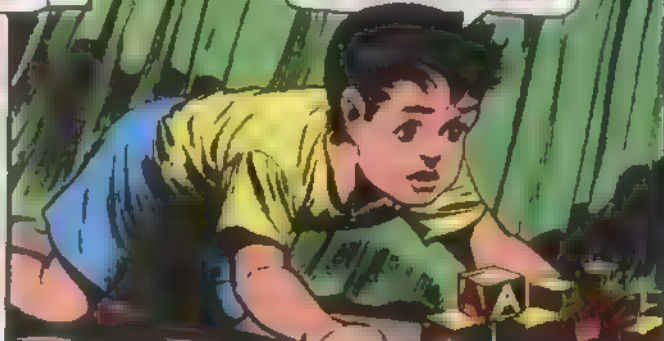
IT WAS THE GNARLED OLD CROOKED TREE THAT CARLO PIETRO HAD SENT! NOW, IT STOOD FIRM AND STRAIGHT... REACHING TOWARD THE SUNLIGHT! ARNOLD STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT, SCRATCHED HIS MOP OF UNKEMPT HAIR... THEN SKIPPED AWAY...

OH, WELL! ANOTHER TIME! NOW I'VE GOT TO GO PLAY WITH MY SOLDIERS!



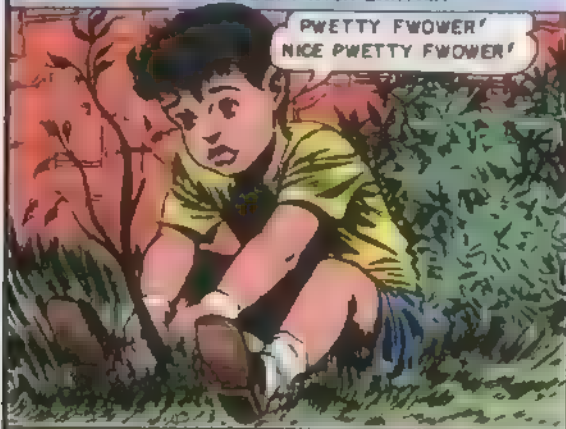
THE NEXT MORNING, ARNOLD TUMBLED OUT OF BED ONTO THE FLOOR! HE TRIED TO GET UP! SOMETHING WAS WRONG! HIS SHORT STUBBY LEGS WOULDN'T RESPOND! HE CRAWLED ALL THAT DAY...

MA .BWOCKS! WHERE ARE MA BWOCKS! OH! DERE DEY AWR! OWVER DERE ..



NEAR THE GARDEN WALL, THE INFANT THAT ARNOLD HAD BECOME CRAWLED AFTER AN INTERESTING LITTLE INSECT! HE STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG GREEN SHOOT, SPROUTING FROM THE SOFT RICH EARTH...

PWETTY FLOWER! NICE PWETTY FLOWER!



THAT NIGHT THE DESERTED HOUSE OF ARNOLD EVERETTE WAS FILLED WITH THE SQUALLING HOWLS OF A HUNGRY BABY...CRYING FOR ITS BOTTLE...

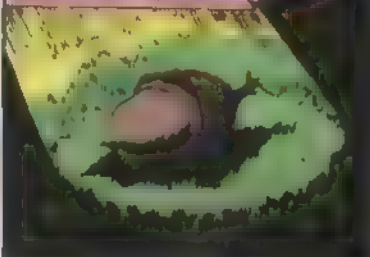
A-WAH... A-WAH... A-WAH... HIC... A-WAH!



TOWARD MORNING, THE SCREAMS HAD CHANGED TO THE FAINT GURGLING AND CRIES OF A NEW-BORN BABE...

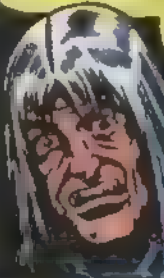


AND SOON, EVEN THOSE GRIES DIED AWAY! AS THE MORNING SUN STREAMED OVER THE GARDEN WALL A GOLDEN RAY SHOT DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SPOT WHERE ARNOLD EVERETTE ...SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE... HAD PLANTED CARLO PIETRO'S GNARLED AND CROOKED TREE! THERE, ON A BARE SPOT OF BLACK EARTH, LAY A SINGLE OBJECT AN ACORN!



HEH, HEH! WELL, KIDDIES! I HOPE YOU SEED DA POINT OF THIS WEIRD LITTLE TALE! WHICH IS WORSE? GROWING OLD OR GROWING YOUNG? ARNOLD CAN'T HELP YOU! HE'S JUST A BLEAM... OF SUNLIGHT... NOW! DON'T FORGET TO READ MY COLUMN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER, FOR BACK ISSUES INFO! NOW I'LL

TURN YOU OVER TO THAT HAG, THE OLD WITCH! 'BYE! DON'T FORGET! OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES... HEH, HEH!



THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP, IT'S ME THE OLD WITCH MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! THIS TIME, FOR THE OFFERING FROM MY CAULDRON, I'VE DREGGED UP A TALE TOLD TO ME BY LARRY DOUGLAS, A THEATRICAL MAN! IT'S IN HIS OWN WORDS, AND HE CALLS IT...

"The Ventriloquist's Dummy!"



IT HAD BEEN YEARS SINCE I'D SEEN CHARLES JEROME! AS I STUDIED HIS PALE, DRAWN FACE I WAS SHOCKED TO SEE HOW MUCH HE'D CHANGED! HIS WARM SMILE HAD DISAPPEARED... IN ITS PLACE WAS A TIGHT GRIMACE! HIS EYES THAT ONCE SPARKLED HAPPILY WERE SAD AND BLOODSHOT, ENCIRCLED BY TIRED LINES

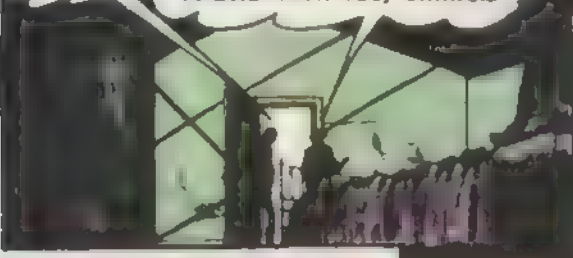
CHARLES! YOU OLD SON-OF-A-GUN! NOW ARE YOU? I'VE BEEN LOOKING HIGH AND LOW FOR YOU!

LARRY! LARRY DOUGLAS! COME IN! COME IN!

CHARLES STEPPED BACK AND I ENTERED HIS HOTEL ROOM! I LOOKED AROUND! THE PLACE WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR AN IRON BED AND A BROKEN CHEST OF DRAWERS! I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES.

HOW DID YOU FIND ME, LARRY?

YOUR OLD AGENT TOLD ME WHERE YOU WERE LIVING! I... I DIDN'T *KNOW* THINGS WERE SO *BAD* WITH YOU, CHARLIE!



CHARLES NODDED! I LOOKED AT HIS HAND... HIS LEFT HAND... THE HAND HE'D USED TO MANIPULATE HIS DUMMY.

RETIRED? YES! YOU CAN CALL IT THAT!

IF YOU'VE RETIRED, WHY DO YOU STILL KEEP YOUR HAND GLOVED?



CHARLIE'D ALWAYS KEPT HIS 'DUMMY-HAND' ENCASED IN A HEAVY WOOLEN MITTEN! I REMEMBERED HOW I'D KIDDED HIM ABOUT IT...

JUST FORCE OF HABIT I GUESS!

TELL ME, CHARLES, DO YOU STILL HAVE MORTY, YOUR DUMMY?



CHARLES JEROME HAD BEEN A FAMOUS VENTRILOQUIST! TEN YEARS BEFORE, HE'D BEEN A STAR! HIS ACT HAD BEEN FANTASTIC! HIS DUMMY HAD BEEN SO LIFE-LIKE! NO ONE HAD EVER SEEN HIS LIPS MOVE! HE'D BEEN ACCLAIMED BY AUDIENCES WHEREVER HE'D PERFORMED.

I I'M NOT WORKING ANYMORE, LARRY!

YES! YOUR AGENT TOLD ME! HE SAID YOU'D REFUSED ALL OFFERS! HE SAID YOU'D *RETIRED*...



CHARLES STARED AT ME FOR A MOMENT! THEN HIS GLANCE SHOT ACROSS THE ROOM TO A BATTERED SUITCASE IN THE CORNER.

OH! YES I SEE! I THOUGHT SO! NOW IS HE... THE...

DON'T TOUCH THAT SUITCASE!



I STOPPED IN MY TRACKS! CHARLES'S VOICE HAD A WILD FRIGHTENED RING IN IT.

COURSE NOT, CHARLES! IF YOU'D RATHER I WOULDN'T! NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO *BUSINESS*! I'VE COME TO OFFER YOU A *JOB*!

A *JOB*? BUT, I TOLD YOU! I'M *NOT WORKING* ANYMORE!



LOOK, CHARLES! I'M THE ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR A *BIG RESORT HOTEL* IN THE MOUNTAINS! THIS CAN MEAN A LOT TO YOU! IT CAN PUT YOU *BACK ON TOP*... IF THEY *LIKE* YOU! WHAT DO YOU SAY? I HAVE A SPOT FOR YOU NEXT WEEKEND!

NO! I WON'T DO IT! I'M *THROUGH PERFORMING*! *THROUGH!*



AS I DROVE BACK UPSTATE, I KEPT THINKING OF CHARLES JEROME! HE'D FALLEN A LONG WAY! I REMEMBERED BACK TO THOSE YEARS WHEN HE'D THRILLED AUDIENCES... HAD THEM ROLLING IN THE AISLES...

YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT!
YOU MEAN MORTY HERE WAS GREAT, LARRY!
CHARLES!



CHARLES'D ALWAYS REFERRED TO MORTY AS THOUGH IT WERE A REAL PERSON! CERTAINLY THE DUMMY BEHAVED THAT WAY! IT WAS THE INCREDIBLE WAY CHARLES USED TO MANIPULATE IT! AND... ALTHOUGH I USED TO THINK IT WAS JUST A PUBLICITY STUNT... CHARLES'D GUARDED THE MANIPULATING HAND WELL...

WHY DO YOU ALWAYS WEAR THAT HEAVY WOOLEN MITTEN, CHARLES?

MY HAND IS MY FORTUNE! I'VE GOT TO PROTECT IT!



I'D SEEN CHARLES'S AGENT BACK IN THOSE YEARS! WHEN I'D BOTTEN AN OFFER OUT IN HOLLYWOOD, I'D SOLD HIS ACCOUNT! THAT WAS THE LAST I'D SEEN OF HIM, ALTHOUGH I'D FOLLOWED HIS CAREER IN THE TRADE PAPERS...

HMM! WHAT'S THIS? CHARLES JEROME LEAVES SHOW AFTER MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF DANGER ON SAME BILL!

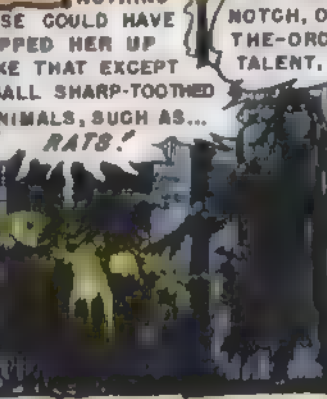
IT'D BEEN AFTER THAT UNEXPLAINED DEATH THAT CHARLES HAD BEGUN HIS DOWNWARD SLIDE! THE GIRL HAD BEEN ATTACKED, IT SEEMED, BY A HOARD OF RATS...

NOTHING ELSE COULD HAVE RIPPED HER UP LIKE THAT EXCEPT SMALL SHARP-TOOTHED ANIMALS, SUCH AS... RATS!

I'D HEARD LITTLE ABOUT HIM AFTER THAT! THEN, WHEN I'D TAKEN THE JOB AS ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR THE WHITE LAKE HOTEL...

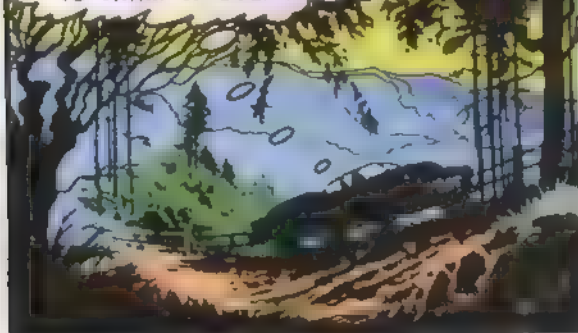
WE WANT TOP-NOTCH, OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY TALENT, LARRY!

I THINK I KNOW ONE ACT YOU'LL LIKE!



I'D BOOKED THE ACTS I'D NEEDED AND THEN LOOKED UP CHARLES! NOW I WAS DRIVING BACK TO THE HOTEL... THE SPOT STILL OPEN FOR THE NEXT WEEKEND...

MAYBE HE'LL CHANGE HIS MIND! I'LL GIVE HIM A LITTLE TIME TO THINK IT OVER!



I WAS SO BUSY THE NEXT FEW DAYS PLANNING THE MID-WEEK SHOWS THAT I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT CHARLES JEROME! THEN ON FRIDAY MORNING, I LOOKED UP FROM MY DESK TO SEE...

CHARLES! YOU DID COME! I'M SO HAPPY!

I HOPE THE SPOT IS STILL OPEN, LARRY!



THERE WAS A STRANGE LOOK IN CHARLES'S EYES AS HE STOOD BEFORE MY DESK! HE SEEMED TO BE STARING RIGHT THROUGH ME...

OF COURSE, CHARLES! THE SPOT IS *YOURS!* I'LL ARRANGE FOR YOUR ROOM!

THAT'S GOOD OF YOU, LARRY!



CHARLES'S MITTENED HAND NUNG AT HIS SIDE! IN HIS OTHER HAND HE GLUTCHED THE SUITCASE CONTAINING MORTY... HIS DUMMY...

WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, CHARLES?

WHY... I JUST DECIDED TO COME OUT OF RETIREMENT. THAT'S ALL!



A BELL-HOP KNOCKED AND ENTERED

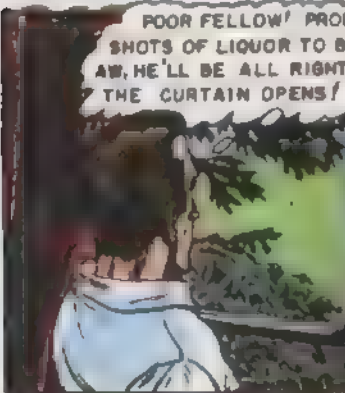
TAKE MR. JEROME TO THE ENTERTAINERS' COTTAGE, JOE! GIVE HIM A NICE ROOM!

YES, SIR! RIGHT THIS WAY, SIR!



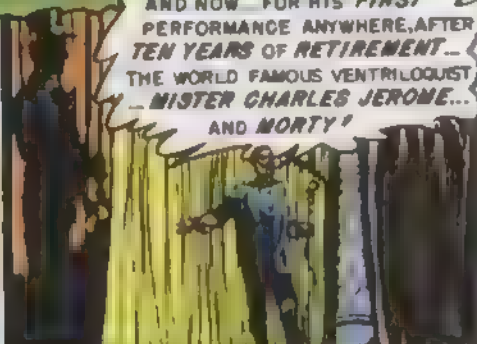
I WATCHED OUT OF MY OFFICE WINDOW IN THE RECREATION HALL AS CHARLES MOVED DOWN THE WALK, CLUTCHING HIS SUITCASE, FOLLOWING THE BELL-HOP! HIS FEET SEEMED TO DRAG... AND HE STAGGERED A LITTLE...

POOR FELLOW! PROBABLY TOOK A FEW SHOTS OF LIQUOR TO BOLSTER HIMSELF. AW, HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. JUST AS SOON AS THE CURTAIN OPENS!



THAT NIGHT, SINCE IT WAS A WEEKEND, THE RECREATION HALL WAS JAMMED! THE SHOW MOVED ALONG SMOOTHLY! THEN IT CAME TIME FOR CHARLES'S ACT! I SAW HIM STANDING IN THE WINGS HOLDING MORTY—HIS FAMILIAR DUMMY. AS THE ANNOUNCER INTRODUCED HIM...

AND NOW—for his *FIRST* PERFORMANCE ANYWHERE, AFTER *TEN YEARS OF RETIREMENT*—THE WORLD FAMOUS VENTRILOQUIST—*MISTER CHARLES JEROME... AND MORTY!*



CHARLES CAME OUT ON THE STAGE WITH MORTY SEATED IN THE CROOK OF HIS RIGHT ARM! THERE WAS SOME SCATTERED APPLAUSE FROM THOSE WHO REMEMBERED THE GREAT MAN IN HIS PRIME! MORTY BEGAN TO EYE THE AUDIENCE, LOOKING FROM FACE TO FACE...

ISN'T HE CUTE?

HE LOOKS SO REAL!

LIKE A LIVE BOY!



SUDDENLY MORTY STOPPED! HIS GLANCE HAD FALLEN UPON A RATHER ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN SEATED NEAR ME! HE WINKED SLYLY... AND QUIPPED...

I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT, HONEY... AFTER THE SHOW!



IT WAS THE PERFECT THING TO SAY! THE AUDIENCE HOWLED! YOU KNOW THE CROWD THAT FREQUENTS A RESORT LIKE THAT... WOMEN ON VACATIONS LOOKING FOR RICH HUSBANDS. MEN HUNTING FOR WEALTHY WIVES! IT ALWAYS ENDS UP LIKE A RAT-RACE... WITH EVERYONE LYING TO EVERYONE ELSE! ANYWAY... THEY LOVED CHARLES AND HIS DUMMY.

...SO, MR. JEROME? YOU KNOW A BETTER WAY TO STUDY ASTRONOMY?

HAW, HAW!

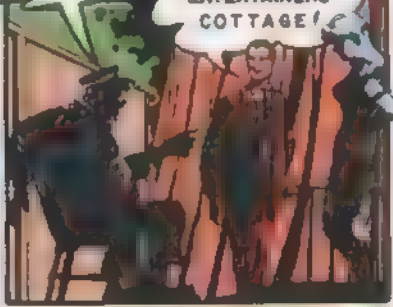
THEY'RE A SCREAM!



AFTER THE SHOW, I WENT BACKSTAGE TO CONGRATULATE CHARLES ON HIS WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE! HE'D OUTDONE HIMSELF! HE'D MANIPULATED MORTY BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE

MR JEROME? WHY, HE LEFT THE HALL AS SOON AS HE CAME OFF-STAGE!

OH? HE MUST HAVE GONE ON BACK TO THE ENTERTAINERS' COTTAGE!



I MOVED DOWN THE WALK TO THE COTTAGE! BACK AT THE HALL, THE GUESTS WERE POURING OUT OF THE EXITS... THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTING ACROSS THE NIGHT AIR TOWARD ME! I COULD HEAR CHARLES'S NAME REFERRED TO IN THE BABBLE OF CONVERSATION...

THEY LIKED HIM!



THE COTTAGE DOOR SLAMMED BEHIND ME AND SILENCE CLOSED IN AS I STOOD IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS! I GAZED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AT THE SIX DOORS.

NOW, WHICH ONE IS CHARLES'S?



SUDDENLY, THE BLOOD FROZE IN MY VEINS! VOICES EXPLODED FROM BEHIND ONE OF THE DOORS... LOUD VOICES HEATED WITH ANGER! CHARLES... USING HIS NORMAL VOICE... WAS ARGUING WITH HIMSELF... USING MORTY'S VOICE

NO! I HEARD! I HEARD! I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU!

YES YOU WILL! I'LL MAKE YOU! YOU'RE TOO WEAK TO STOP ME!



I STOOD OUTSIDE THE DOOR FOR A MOMENT LISTENING TO THE RAVING...

GOOD LORD! HE'S OUT OF HIS MIND! HE'S FIGHTING WITH THAT DUMMY OF HIS OVER THE GIRL IN THE AUDIENCE!



I KNOCKED! THE YELLING STOPPED ABRUPTLY! I HEARD A SHORT WHIMPER AND THEN CHARLES OPENED THE DOOR! HIS EYES WERE RED AS THOUGH HE'D BEEN CRYING...

I I WANTED TO CONGRATULATE YOU, CHARLES! THE AUDIENCE LOVED YOU!

TH...THANK YOU, LARRY! I...I'M TIRED! I MUST GO TO BED NOW... SO I WON'T INVITE YOU IN!



CHARLES CLOSED THE DOOR, AND I STOOD THERE FEELING FOOLISH! I SHRUGGED AND RETURNED TO THE 'REC' HALL! THERE WAS SOME WORK I HAD TO DO BEFORE I COULD GO TO BED! LATER AS I SAT AT MY DESK...

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEAGHHHHH!

WHAT WAS THAT?



I RUSHED OUTSIDE! IT WAS PITCH BLACK! I RAN DOWN TOWARD THE LAKE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SCREAM! I TRIPPED OVER SOMETHING SOFT LYING IN MY PATH AND WENT SPRAWLING! WHEN I LIT A MATCH...

OH, MY GOD! A WOMAN! SHE'S DEAD! RIPPED TO PIECES... AS IF SHE'D BEEN ATTACKED BY SMALL SHARP-TOOTHED ANIMALS! BY... RATS!

GOOD LORD!



IT WAS THE SAME WOMAN THAT CHARLES HAD MORTY QUIP TO! I THOUGHT OF THE DANCER THAT HAD DIED THE SAME WAY TEN YEARS BEFORE! I RUSHED TO THE COTTAGE AND FLUNG OPEN CHARLES'S DOOR...

CHARLES! HE... HE'S GONE!

THE SUITCASE CONTAINING CHARLES'S DUMMY SAT ON THE FLOOR IN THE CORNER! I MOVED TOWARD IT! I HAD TO SEE! I THREW BACK THE LID...

WHAT THE...? THE DUMMY HAS NO HEAD!



I STARED DOWN AT THE HEADLESS VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THEN I SAW OTHER THINGS IN THE SUITCASE...

MAKE-UP! THE SUITCASE HAS MAKE-UP IN IT!



A SHOUT FROM THE HOTEL KITCHEN DREW MY ATTENTION! I RUSHED ACROSS THE GRASS AND ONTO THE PORCH! THE CHEF STOOD WIDE-EYED... WAVING HIS ARMS...

WHAT HAPPENED?

HE TAKE MY CLEAVER! HE STEAL MY CLEAVER! THAT VENTRILOQUIST!



I LOOKED AROUND! A MITTEN LAY ON THE FLOOR AT MY FEET! I PICKED IT UP! IT WAS COVERED WITH BLOOD! SUDDENLY I HEARD CHARLES'S VOICE COMING FROM BEHIND SOME BUSHES...

CHARLES!

I'M GOING TO GET RID OF YOU... ONCE AND FOR ALL... YOU... HIDEOUS FIEND! YOU LITTLE BEAST!



AS I RUSHED TOWARD THE BUSHES, I HEARD MORTY'S VOICE...SHOUTING, SCREAMING! THEN A CRAWLING SENSATION STARTED UP MY SPINE! THE VOICES OVERLAPPED! THERE WERE TWO VOICES...

NO! DON'T, CHARLES! DON'T!

IT'S NO USE! I'M FREEING MYSELF...FOR GOOD!

AS I SWUNG AROUND THE BUSH, I CAUGHT SIGHT OF A GLEAM OF STEEL IN THE BLACKNESS! CHARLES STOOD OVER A TREE STUMP...HIS LEFT FORE-ARM PRESSED ON ITS FLAT TOP! AND HE WAS BRINGING THE GLEAVER DOWN UPON IT...

NO! NO! EEEEEEE!

MORTY'S SCREAM WAS CUT SHORT AS THE GLEAVER FELL! A NAUSEATING FANGED HEAD...SHRIELED AND UGLY...ROLLED TO MY FEET.

I'M RID OF YOU! RID OF YOU!

OH, MY GOD!

CHARLES PITCHED FORWARD AND FELL! HIS LEFT HAND HAD BEEN SEVERED AT THE WRIST! NOW I KNEW WHY HE'D ALWAYS WORN THE MITTEN! INSTEAD OF A LEFT HAND, A **HIDEOUS HEAD** HAD GROWN FROM HIS WRIST...

I...I HAD TO DO IT, LARRY! TEN YEARS AGO HE KILLED THAT DANCER! HE TOOK OVER MY BODY AND KILLED HER!

YOU'RE BLEEDING, CHARLES! I'VE GOT TO GET YOU A DOCTOR!

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, THEY SAID I HAD A **DEFORMED HAND!** BUT AS I GREW UP, THAT **HORRIBLE HEAD DEVELOPED!** SOON IT OPENED ITS WICKED EYES AND BEGAN TO TALK! I BECAME A **VENTRILLOQUIST...** USED IT AS A **DUMMY!**

THAT EXPLAINS THE **REALISTIC MOVEMENTS** MORTY ALWAYS HAD!

THEN IT BEGAN TO WREST CONTROL OF MY **BODY** WHILE I **SLEPT!** I HAD TO RETIRE FROM SHOW BUSINESS! I KEPT THE HEAD **DRUGGED!** BUT YOU...YOU CAME...AND OFFERED ME WORK! TONIGHT, IT **TOOK OVER AGAIN!** I COULDN'T **STOP IT!**

I...I...

I'LL GO FOR THE DOCTOR, CHARLES! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

I TIED A CRUDE **TORNIQUET** ON CHARLES'S WRIST AND RUSHED OFF! WHEN I GOT BACK, CHARLES WAS **DEAD!** HE'D BEEN **TORN TO SHREDS!** THE SEVERED **HEAD** LAY NEARBY...

THE HEAD WASN'T **QUITE DEAD!** WITH ITS LAST THREAD OF LIFE, IT **ATTACKED** CHARLES! THEY'VE **DESTROYED** EACH OTHER!

HEE, HEE! WELL, THAT'S THE YARN LARRY **PALMED** OFF ON ME! SO I JUST **HANDED** IT DOWN TO YOU! I HOPE YOU LIKED IT! NEXT TIME YOU SEE A **VENTRILLOQUIST**, LOOK CAREFULLY TO SEE HOW HE HOLDS HIS **DUMMY!** IF HE'S **REACHING IN** TOO FAR...**BEWARE!** WELL, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN **THE VAULT OF HORROR!** DON'T FORGET TO READ **THE CRYPT KEEPER'S CORNER** FOR BACK ISSUE 'N' **SUBSCRIPTION INFO!** 'BYE, NOW!

**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL
THE EC COMICS!**



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REMIT \$8 EACH (\$12 OUTSIDE US IN US FUNDS)
DON'T CUT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
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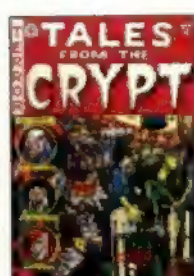
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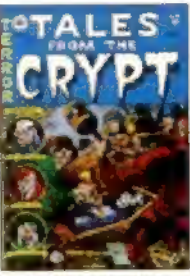
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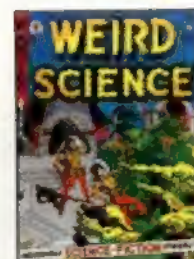
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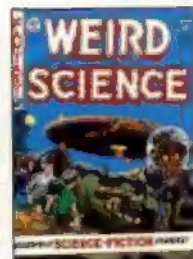
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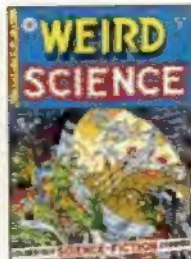
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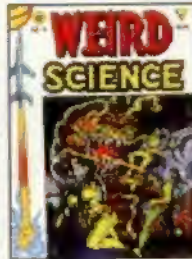
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